



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF ART AND DESIGN



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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.69648/YBBW9228>

International Journal of Art and Design (IJAD),
2024; 1(1): 39-47

ijad.ibupress.com

Online ISSN: 2955-2400



Application : 30.04.2024

Revision : 15.05.2024

Acceptance : 20.06.2024

Publication : 20.06.2024



Despot, K., & Sandeva, V. (2024). The Influence of German Modernism in Macedonia. International Journal of Art and Design, 1(1), 39-47
<https://doi.org/10.69648/YBBW9228>



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The Influence of German Modernism in Macedonia

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Abstract

German Modernism is characterized by minimalist design and the use of functional materials such as steel, glass and concrete. The elements have a simple layout to provide a sense of spatial design. Simplicity and functionality of objects make them the center of attention, while the use of light and shapes creates a dramatic atmosphere.

German Modernism has a great influence on interiors and furniture through use of minimalist and functional designs. Representatives of this style category were known for using simple forms and quality materials with a focus on functionality and ergonomics. German Modernism has a deep connection with industrial design practice, resulting in placement of objects from mass production in the interior to bring high quality and elegance. of the simple design. This style fits well with the modern culture and the modern trends in design in Macedonia which makes it very acceptable and popular in many homes and offices today.

Keywords: Functionality, design, materials, aesthetics, ergonomics

New Objectivism

Following the First World War, a new movement appeared in the German architecture and art called New Objectivism. Its followers rejected expressionism, which was characterized by reflecting the soul state of the artist and invited artists to download the art of a country and to bring it closer to ordinary people, not only to lovers of the art. In architecture, this meant functional buildings, as opposed to the decorative styles of the previous century. Walter Gropius was the leader of this movement. Peter Behrens was the other important follower, as shown in his architectural works....

The reason for the emergence of the German Modernism was the Industrial Revolution, i.e., the development of factories and machines led to a change in the way of life of people and the economy. It impressed the German modernists to develop new ways of production and processing of materials.

Nationalism was strongly present in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century and was the starting point for the German modernists to try to create a new contemporary culture, which will be connected to the national identity.

Germany is a strong philosophical nation that has a long tradition in philosophy. In conjunction with new scientific research and technical advances, this led to new ideas in art and design.

With the increase of the urban population and the increased possibility for communication, German modernists began to experiment with new ways of communication and mass culture to create different forms of art, architecture and design.

German Modernism was most present in Berlin, Munich, and Stuttgart during the period from 1910 to 1930. These cities had a large number of artists, architects and designers who fought for the modern style and produced things that characterized the influence of modernism in Europe.

The main characteristics of the German Modernism are love for technological progress and industrialization. The strong sense of crisis of moral values and spiritual multicolor, experimenting and innovations in literature, poetry, art... the phenomenon of the City Soul, which is described in all arts as impersonal, annoying, and foreign. The influence of the German philosophy and mystical ideas underpinned by an aesthetic interest in cold mechanical forms and lines. Impulsivity, not the aesthetic experience. One of the strongest examples of that is the phenomenon of expressiveness.

Figure 1

German Modernism in contemporary view



The main distinguishing feature of the German Modernism is its minimalist style lines, geometric shapes, and the use of technological innovations in the production of industrial design. These features stand out in various areas like automotive, kitchen and furniture design, where the same principles are used to create modern, functional, and quality products.

The furniture is usually made of metal and wood and the colors are kept to minimum dominant use of black, white, and gray. Lighting plays a big role in the design with spatially distributed light fixtures that create beautiful contrasts playing with the lightness of the tones. Classic porcelain accessories are replaced by glass and metal that are adapted to modern needs. The result of this connection is a visually elegant and functional interior that is an adaptable workplace and home at the same time. German Modernism has had a significant influence on industrial design due to its emphasis on functionality, economy, efficiency, and quality.

German Modernism in industrial design has attracted the attention of companies such as Bauhaus, Braun and Miele, which changed the way of producing products in order to optimize them at less costs and with better functionality. German

Modernism also introduced the concept of “form follows the function” in industrial design, which means that the design should be created for the functional needs of the product.

Figure 2,3

Furniture in German Modernism with a contemporary display



German Modernism in furniture is characterized by the following functional aspects:

1. Minimalist design – modern furniture designs created in Germany represent minimalist design, aimed at providing maximum functionality of a minimal space. This furniture design is intended for smaller apartments and apartments.
2. Precision in manufacturing – German furniture manufacturers are known for their precision in manufacturing. The furniture is made of the highest quality materials and using the most modern production technologies.
3. Modular design – modern furniture design in Germany is created in such a way that new modules are combined and added to meet the users’ needs. This modular design is aimed at visually increasing the space and creating a dynamic living space.

4. Comfort in Germany - furniture is created with the greatest care and attention paid to users' comfort. The furniture design is intended for long-term use in order to create a comfortable space for rest and relaxation.

Figure 4, 5

Selection and implementation of materials in German Modernism furniture



Bauhaus

Bauhaus is a cultural movement and artistic style that emerged in Germany in 1919, led by Walter Gropius. The name of the movement comes from the name of the school of arts and crafts, which Gropius established in Weimar. Bauhaus has roots in the modernism and is focused on industrial production of works of art, as well as the use of simple forms and the functionality of objects. Bauhaus, as a cultural movement, has had a significant impact on all areas of art and design, and its principles are still applied today in various segments of architecture and design.

The Bauhaus began with education that combined the aesthetics of painting with the usefulness of the ability to make products. The students learned how to create machine-made models with good functional design. Gropius preferred machining, geometric and modular design. As director of the Bauhaus, he applied the following principles in the education of the students: coexistence of modern style, machining,

handwork, construction, good design, new aesthetics. He believed in simplicity and multiplication - the design of something simple that can be standardized and then mass produced. Following that, the Bauhaus became the center of new creative forces in design that embraced the challenges of the technical progress.

This new way of education consisted of two main innovations. First of all, the craftsmanship was introduced in art (painting) and secondly - a preliminary course, which was general and comprehensive, was introduced. In order to determine a non-academic educational approach, the teachers at the Bauhaus were called masters and the students apprentices. This preliminary course inspired the basic courses that are presently the basis for schools of design around the world. The new movements in the world of design - cubism, futurism and De Style favored modernism, namely the application of abstract characters and geometric shapes.

De Style were the first to organize their ideas through publications among groups that strove to catch up with modern ideas in design. De Style magazine spread their principles. The principles of geometric rigor originate from it: proportion supersedes form, the study of mechanics supersedes the craft, logical construction replaces free lyricism. Its painters gave Bauhaus significant experience in drawing and use of color—theories that were put into use and widely distributed among artists everywhere. Gropius said that shapes and colors showed meaning: red causes different emotions in people than blue or yellow; rounded shapes speak differently from edges; the elements form the grammar of creation, its rules of rhythm, proportion, value of light, empty or full space, etc.

“To be a machine user is to be within the spirit of the century”

German Modernism and the Bauhaus school share a common radical ideology on the modernization of art and architecture. Both movements also have the same goals, namely, the creation of functional and aesthetic products that can be applied and effectively produced. The school was created as a German school institution of applied art but continued with the concept of modernism within the German culture. Thus, the movement significantly entered German Modernism and thus attracted the biggest names of culture who helped the development.

German Modernism in Macedonia

German Modernism had a significant impact on the Macedonian culture and art in the period between the 1920s and the 1940s. This period is known as the period of

the Macedonian Modernism when Macedonian artists and cultural workers sought modernization of the Macedonian art and culture. German art and culture were an important source of inspiration for the Macedonian modernists.

From the German artists, the influence of Expressionism and New Objectivity is visible in the works of Macedonian artists such as Nikola Martinovski, Marko Ristovski, Atanas Ajlirski, and others. The influence was visible in art, literature and social and political ideas of the Macedonian modernists, which were reinforced by the German philosophical and political concepts.

German Modernism had a significant influence on interior design in Macedonia, especially in the period between 1920 and 1940. In this period, Macedonian designers and architects sought modernization of the interior of the Macedonian homes and public house spaces.

One of the most important aspects of German Modernism is functionality, i.e., the design should satisfy the functional aspect of the object. This idea is reflected through the interior design in Macedonia, where the designers try to satisfy the functional aspect of the space but also to create a beautiful, modern look. German Modernism also has an influence on materials and covering of the space.

Materials that characterize the design of the interior in German Modernism are glass, steel, concrete, wood, and leather. These materials were used in the design of the Macedonian interior where stone was often implemented as good traditional material and the resources available in Macedonia.

German Modernism has a strong influence on furniture design. The furniture in the German Modernism is simple, functional and comfortable, while the used materials are metal and leather. This way of creating furniture was also reflected in Macedonia, where Macedonian designers tried to create simple and functional pieces of furniture following the German example.

In Macedonia, German Modernism is reflected through many buildings, especially in the period between 1920s and 1940s. Some of the most significant buildings in Macedonia that were designed according to German Modernism are: The Railway Building station in Skopje - This building was designed according to the German Modernism by the Macedonian architect Andrej Damjanov in 1938. The building is characterized by clean lines, extremely simple form, and precisely processed surfaces.

The building of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Skopje - This building was designed by architect Ivan Bilebanoski in 1970. The building is characterized by its modern architecture, geometric shapes and use of concrete and glass.

The industrial design in Macedonia is significantly inspired by the Bauhaus movement, which was the most influential in the period between the two world wars. Bauhaus was a modern art and design movement that focused on the functional and industrial design, with an emphasis on the perfection of form and the use of new materials and technologies. In Macedonia, Bauhaus-inspired industrial design can be noticed in many areas, such as furniture production, ceramics, textiles, graphic design and alike.

Some of the most important representatives of this style in Macedonia are the designers Aleksandar Tomovski, Miroslav Krlezha and Ljube Popovski, who created modern products with clean lines, clear shapes and minimalist design.

Examples of industrial design in Macedonia that are inspired by the Bauhaus style include: the furniture designs of Aleksandar Tomovski, such as the chairs “Macedonia” and “Lady”; the ceramic products of Miroslav Krlezha, including cups, plates and vases with minimalist design; the textile designs of Ljube Popovski, such as the design of the Macedonian national dress.

Conclusion

German Modernism is a living heritage of architecture and art in Germany from the 20th century, which has had a great significance not only for the German but also for the world culture.

Today, German Modernism is still of interest for studying and analyzing, as well as preserving and restoring its architectural and cultural monuments. The main characteristics of the German Modernism are its own minimalist lines, geometric shapes, and the use of technological innovations in the production of industrial design. These features stand out in different areas such as automotive, kitchen and furniture design, where they are used as principles to create modern, functional, and quality products.

German Modernism has a strong influence in Macedonia, in the area of interior design aspect to ensure functionality in the furniture section, in selection of materials and comfort.

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